

UPDATE

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Director's Message



As the 2004 year comes to a close, the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center Staff wish all of you a very happy and joyous holiday season. If you travel, please travel safely and even if you stay close to home, think and act in safe ways.



Sandra Kruse, Director
Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

CPAC Announcement

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center would like to take a moment to remind everyone that appointments with Human Resources Advisors and Assistants are encouraged. This will benefit everyone involved.

**Human Resources Advisors and Assistants are available for appointments and or phone calls from
0900 – 1130 & 1230 - 1630**

Call 596-0927 to set up your appointment today!!

Hours of Operation

Civilian Personnel (CPAC)
0900 – 1130 1230 – 1630
Building 470, Room 2205
573-596-0927

Non-Appropriated Funds (NAF)
0730 – 1130 1230 – 1630
Building 470, Room 2204
573-596-0283

Missouri Career Center
0800 – 1630
Building 470, Room 2203
573-596-0294

<http://www.wood.army.mil/CPO/Accept1.pdf>

http://www.wood.army.mil/mwr/nonappropriated_fund_employment.htm

<http://www.works.state.mo.us/>



Need help with finding a job!

The Missouri Career Center provides a variety of services related to employment and training.

The Career Center has a "Self-Service" option available to job seekers in their resource center. Job seekers may search for jobs, prepare resumes, take a typing test, complete an aptitude/skills survey or view a variety of printed and on-line job information.

The Career Center also utilizes an automated job match system that is designed to match applicant skills with employer requirements. The automated system matches an applicant's skills, knowledge, abilities, salary requirement, and location availability to the requirements of the position as determined by the employer.

Resume service is also available. Resumes are stored in a database and are used with the on-line job matching system. A computer software package provides applicants with the option of preparing their own professional resume.

Individuals who have used the Career Center before may remember Missouri Works. As of June 1st the State of Missouri switched to using GreatHires.org. If experiencing any problems or any questions don't hesitate to give them a call.

573-596-0294
Bldg 470, Rm 2203
M-F - 8:00am to 4:30pm

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

Resumes are currently being accepted from Health Care Professionals interested in serving as Federal civilian employees at the General Leonard Wood Army Community Hospital (GLWACH) or at one of the Dental Clinics for the following occupations:

- Physician, GS-602
- Dentist, GS-680
- Podiatrist, GS-668
 - Optometrist, GS-662
 - Registered Nurse, GS-610
 - Physician Asst., GS-603
 - Pharmacist, GS-660
 - Audiologist, GS-665
- Expanded Function:** Dental Auxiliaries to include GS-681, GS-682 & GS-683
 - Practical Nurse, GS-620
 - Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist, GS-647

Provide copies of your college transcript license and resume to:

Soldier Service Center, Bldg #470
ATTN: CPAC, Ste #2205
140 Replacement Avenue
Fort Leonard Wood, MO 65473
Or just come on in with your information!

TSP Balances On ABC/EBIS

On Saturday, 20 November 04, the latest version of Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS) was loaded. This load includes an interface to the TSP website. When an employee enters into EBIS and clicks on My Benefits, then TSP, the user is offered the opportunity to enter their TSP (website) PIN to retrieve fund balances. The software then retrieves balances only from the TSP website. (It will not yet retrieve the fund allocations.) The PIN is not stored, so each time the user retrieves their balances, they will need to re-enter their TSP PIN.

TSP Updates

TSP has made some changes to the participant statements. For your convenience, this and all future quarterly statements can be viewed and printed from the TSP website at www.tsp.gov. Statements will no longer be automatically mailed; however, you may request one through the Account Access section of the TSP website or through the voice response feature of the ThriftLine @ 504-255-8777 or 877-968-3778.

The next statement should be available in January 2005 and will cover the time period from October 1, through December 31, 2004.

*****1234 Your SSN will have a new look on your participant statement to protect your privacy.

Effective July 1, 2004, TSP will start deducting a \$50.00 fee from the proceeds of each new loan. Participants will be allowed to have only one general-purpose loan and one residential loan. Once a loan is paid in full, the applicant will not be entitled for another loan of the same type for 60 days.

For more information you can visit the TSP website at <http://www.tsp.gov>

To enter the Account Access site on the TSP Web site, you will need your SSN and TSP Pin.

Need a new PIN? If you have lost or have forgotten your PIN for your TSP, you can request a new PIN on the Web site @ <http://www.tsp.gov>. Go to Account Access then to Account Transactions.

Please allow approximately 10 days to receive your PIN in the mail.

Direct Deposit is the fastest and safest method for receiving money from your TSP account. Please check with your financial institution first to **verify the routing number and your account number** so that your money arrives securely and without delay into the right account.

New FEGLI Premiums

The New FEGLI premiums become effective January 1, 2005. Premiums will be applied on pay period beginning January 9, 2005. These are the only FEGLI premiums that are changing at this time. New premiums are shown below:

Age Band	Bi Weekly Per \$1000 of coverage	Monthly Per \$1000 of coverage
65-69	\$0.72	\$1.560
70-74	\$1.20	\$2.600
75-79	\$1.80	\$3.900
80 and over	\$2.40	\$5.200

Health Savings Accounts

The OPM has announced a new health care option that will, depending on your own health care and financial priorities, give you additional opportunities to save and better manage your hard-earned dollars. The FEHB Program will offer 18 HDHPs in 2005. These health plans together with a Health Saving Account (HSA) or a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) provide a tax-advantaged savings vehicle for the purpose of paying for your medical expenses.

To learn more about HDHPs, visit OPM's new web sit at <http://www.opm.gov/hsa/>. You will find basic information on HSAs, HRAs, and a chart comparing their features. Additional information will be provided in conjunction with the FEHB Open Season, Nov 8 through Dec 13, 2004, in the 2005 Guide to FEHB Plans and in the individual HDHP brochures.

TSP Open Season

October 15 - December 31

April 15 – June 15

There are currently five funds available for investing your TSP contributions:

- ***G Fund** – Government Securities Investment – no risk
- ***C Fund** – Common Stock Index Investment – risky
- ***F Fund** – Fixed Income Index Investment – moderate risk
- ***I Fund** – International Stock Index Investment Fund - risky
- ***S Fund** – Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment Fund – risky

If you are a CSRS employee, you may contribute up to 9% of your basic pay each pay period. You do not receive any agency contributions. If you are a FERS employee, you may contribute up to 14% of your basic pay each pay period. The agency will automatically contribute 1%. The agency will match your contributions dollar for dollar on the first 3%, and 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2%. Since TSP changes are completed telephonically or through the web, you no longer need to complete forms to conduct transactions. However, you still need forms to designate beneficiaries and to request withdrawals. You can get TSP forms from the TSP website at <http://www.tsp.gov>

Transactions done on the ABC-C website (<https://www.abc.army.mil>) affect only new money going into your account, (new employee elections, Open Season transactions, or to stop your biweekly payroll contributions). You use the TSP Thrift Line (877-968-3778) when you want to inquire on your TSP account balance and request interfund transfers and loans. Interfund transfers move existing money from one fund to another. Fund allocations must also be done through the TSP.

CATCH UP CONTRIBUTIONS

Planning that exotic get away? Want to put more money away for those golden years? TSP catch-up contributions are tax-deferred to TSP participant's age 50 and older that meets the eligibility requirements.

Catch-up contributions are not subject to the TSP Open Season rules and more than one election may be made in any given year, so long as the annual limit is not exceeded. **The maximum amount you can contribute in calendar year 2004 is \$3000.** Catch-Up Contributions can be started, changed or stopped at any time.

Additional information can be found in TSP Bulletin 03-4, 7 Feb 03. Bulletins are located on the TSP website at <http://www.tsp.gov> under Info for Agency Reps and then TSP Bulletins.

FEHB Open Season

Open season for the FEHB Program will be November 8 thru December 13, 2004. Open season elections will be effective January 9, 2005.

There are many significant plan changes that will take place in the 2005 to include terminations of plans and plans reducing their service areas by terminating enrollment codes. If your plan falls under either of these categories, you will need to enroll in a plan during the open season in order to retain health benefits coverage.

Some plans will be reducing their services areas without terminating an enrollment. Employees enrolled in those plans may elect another health plan during open season or travel to the plan's remaining service area to receive benefits.

Employees will want to review the information that will be available at health fairs and on the OPM website to determine eligibility, premiums, deductibles, services covered, and other pertinent information prior to making a decision to enroll. The OPM site is <http://www.opm.gov/insure>.

Many existing plans will be offering a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) without new enrollment codes. Some existing and/or new plans will be offering a HDHP with new enrollment codes. If your plan is offering a HDHP or the service area is being expanded with a new enrollment code, you must make an enrollment change to enroll in the new code or elect another health plan during the open season.

As with any open season, you are encouraged to review your current health plan in order to determine whether it will meet your needs for the upcoming year. Additional information and links to other appropriate websites can be found on <https://www.abc.army.mil/>

Important FEHB Update for Blue Cross/Blue Shield

Late breaking news for employees who have Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BC/BS) as their health insurance provider. As most of you know, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and St. John's Health System were not able to come to an acceptable agreement regarding health care premiums. This affects certain health care facilities and physicians who work in them and will have a significant effect on many employees who have their health insurance with BC/BS.

Information was recently received that Blue Cross and Blue Shield is negotiating private contracts with some physicians but they strongly recommended to contact your health care provider to determine if they are going to contract with Blue Cross and Blue Shield. If you have already changed, you should be able to change back if the action is "pending" and it is still open season. If you are not successful at changing back, it is recommended that you contact Blue Cross/Blue Shield at: 1-877-276-9287

As more information is provided it will be sent to you. An updated provider list for Blue Cross/Blue Shield will be also be provided electronically or in hard copy as soon as it is available.

RESUMIX for DEU

The Army has started using RESUMIX for some Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) announcements. Make sure to read each announcement carefully, there are still announcements opening, asking for a paper copy resume. RESUMIX uses state-of-the-art optical character (OCR) software and a patented skills extraction system to read resumes, extract skills and match them to the job requirements.

Applicants can apply for positions announced by the DEU by submitting an application using the Army Resume Builder. Using the Army Resume Builder will save time and the cost of mailing resumes. In addition, it is less likely that the applicants will miss consideration because their resume was not received on time, was incomplete, or was not in the proper format. By using the Army Resume Builder, applicants will receive immediate confirmation that the resume was received and processed.

Applicants will have easy access to real-time information on the status of their application via the Internet by using our system called the *Applicant Notification System Web-Enabled response (ANSWER)*. Applicants will also be able to view their resume currently on file.

Deployment of the RESUMIX tool for DEU will bring substantial savings in both effort and time for applicants, selecting officials and human resources specialists.

Checking the Status of Your Resume

You have easy access to real-time information on the status of your application via the Internet by using our system called ANSWER. By following the instructions at the ANSWER web site, you create a user-id and password that will give you access to the status of your resume and self-nomination(s). You can also view the resume you currently have on file. If you have questions regarding your status viewed on ANSWER, please use the "Answer Mail" before contacting the CPAC. ANSWER can be accessed at:

<https://cpsrxtp.belvoir.army.mil/staffing/answer/online/apps/default.asp>.

If you do not have an ANSWER account established and need assistance, e-mail your question(s) to applicanthelp@cpsrxtp.belvoir.army.mil.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ARMY RESUME BUILDER

Q. I forgot my User ID and PIN. How do I get a new one?

A. The Automated Resume Builder UserID and PIN help is available at:

https://cpolst.belvoir.army.mil/rb/rb_get_uid_pin.cgi

If you enter your SSN and an email address that matches the one in your resume, you will be emailed an automatic reply with your UserID and PIN. If the email address does not match, it will generate a message to a queue and you will receive a manual email response with your UserID and PIN in about a day.

Q. I have put my resume in the Army Resume Builder, but my ANSWER account still shows inactive? How do I make it active?

A. First you will have to go back through the Army Resume Builder and edit your existing resume, scroll down to the bottom and save resume to database. At next page, click on the link to let go to the correct e-mail page. The next page will have text boxes needing your user id, pin number, and your social security number. After these are completed check the box labeled Central Database, then scroll down and click on submit. You have just sent your resume to the Central Database and your resume status should be updated in about an hour. Do not self-nominate for positions without an active resume.

Inquiries—use this email address to ask questions related to application procedures or questions regarding your consideration.

DO NOT SEND YOUR RESUME TO THIS ADDRESS!!

applicanthelp@cpsrxtp.belvoir.army.mil

Communication is an easy thing...

Most of us have attended classes on communication and understand there is a process that explains how communication takes place and if followed, the transmission of information should work. You know how it's supposed to work.

Sender determines the who, what, and how to communicate

Message is sent

Receiver interprets

Feedback is elicited from the sender

However, communication is the one thing that goes awry in our daily interactions. It causes confusion, hurt feelings, incomplete missions, and is often interpreted very differently than it was intended. It can quickly take on a life of its own if not handled with care.

Some things to consider are below. It may be a different approach for some, but if you are having trouble communicating with those you work for, with, around, at work, or at home, take a few moments to consider the following. It's possible that it just may just improve your day-to-day communication.

Senders (you know who you are)

Who do you want to receive and to the information? New employees, high-ranking military or civilian, your supervisor, your peer, someone who is in a line or staff position? Communication techniques vary (or they should for each situation). It's important to choose the correct tool to communicate. Face to face, telephone, email, and writing are the most common tools. Also consider the type of language to use. English is English or is it? Acronyms are very common for organizations, but consider the fact receivers may not know what they mean. Many receivers complain that senders talk over their heads, or around the subject leaving them with more questions than the answer(s) they were seeking. Body language communicates volumes. There are also a variety of facial expressions that are universal and senders should be aware of theirs and those who receive their messages. Eye contact is a good thing (unless it is intimidating) and normally signifies that there is interest in the communication.

Message (whatever it is)

The message should be in terms that are understandable to the receiver. For example explaining the process of obtaining funds for road improvements to a personnelist would be quite different than explaining the same process to someone who works in a budget office. Pacing is also another part of communication the sender should consider. If someone speaks at a rapid rate, you might speed up your rate to match theirs. If the receiver speaks slower; your message and explanations should also be at slower pace. Speaking faster never ensures that receiver understands the message and it may just convey that the sender would rather not be sending the message or doesn't understand it either (and hoping you won't ask questions).

Receivers (you have all been there)

When the message is received you begin to decipher it. If it is clear, you may want to use feedback to ensure you received it in the way it was intended. Remember if it can be misinterpreted, it will. If it isn't clear, take that moment and repeat in your own words what you think you heard. Continue to refine the message until you are certain that you understand. Sometimes this takes courage, but you must if you are to carry out what the sender intends. Using this simple communication skill will save incorrect interpretation and may even save resources (revisiting the same subject at a later date).

Communication...

Barriers to communication

Time of day, noise, room temperature, prejudice, rank, status, intimidation, body language, hostility, defensiveness, preoccupation, stereotyping and clothing just to name a few.

Some other tidbits, which may be helpful

- Face to face communication. Ideally, this should take place in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere, free of phone or other interruptions.
- Telephonic communication. Should be courteous and to the point.
- Electronic communication. Begin with the person's name. Take into consideration the rank of the person and practice courtesy. Never type your electronic communication in upper case (it conveys you are yelling)! We are all busy and that's not going to change. Take a moment to end this communication with a thank you and your name. When you don't the receiver may feel you don't think enough of them to provide common courtesy.
- Electronic Communication II. What did we do before email? We talked by phone or in person. These tools are still the best and should be used if possible.
- Written communication. Tell them what you are going to tell them; tell them; tell them what you told them. If you reread your written word it should communicate the who, what, why and where.
- Remember that it only takes a minute to hurt someone's feelings or offend them and just as long to make the communication a positive event.

There are many who are great communicators, but there are also many who have the opportunity to improve our communication skills. All it takes is a little thought, practice and determination.

There is always room for improvement.



Career Development

Whose responsibility is it? Although supervisors, as leaders, have a responsibility to help employees develop to their highest potential, employees must assume primary responsibility. Development will not occur if an employee does not have the ability and desire to grow and develop. More than that, an employee must consistently demonstrate that ability in their current job and to their current supervisor. Career progression in the Federal government is based on merit. Excellent performance in your current job is a good indicator of potential for excellent performance in higher grades.

If you are interested in promotion opportunities, you should begin with a self-assessment of your knowledge, skills and abilities, mobility, accomplishments, and progress as a basis for setting your individual career goals. Also consider your personal interests and define what personal success is to you. Finally, you need to determine your willingness to provide the investment of time, effort and mobility needed to succeed, evaluate alternatives, and develop a timetable. Keep in mind that there is no “magic formula” to career development and progression. Some of the resources that may be helpful to you follow.

You probably already know that Army job announcements, the Army Resume Builder, and job kits are available online at <http://www.cpol.army.mil> but did you know that you can be considered for HQDA career intern positions through the North Central Civilian Personnel Operations Center (NC CPOC) in Rock Island at <https://ncweb.ria.army.mil/dainterns/default.htm> ? The NC CPOC is the total service provider for centrally recruiting HQDA Interns to include advertising vacancies, rating applications, and issuing referral lists to selecting officials. Geographic mobility is a requirement for entry into the program and you must be willing to move to the initial training site, or upon graduation from the intern program, you may be assigned to any location within the Department of Army.

Did you know that Army also has established civilian Career Programs within some career fields? A career program is comprised of occupational series and functional fields grouped together on the basis of population, occupational structure, grade range, and commonalty job and qualification characteristics. Career programs were established to ensure there is an adequate base of qualified and trained professional, technical and administrative personnel to meet Army’s current and future needs. Detailed information on career programs is available online at <http://www.cpol.army.mil/permis/6328.html>, including links to AR 690-950, Career Management and DA PAM 690-43, A Supervisor’s Guide to Career Development and Counseling for Career Program Employees.

Additional information on Training and Leadership Development is available online at <http://www.cpol.army.mil>. Click on “Training” and take a look at the information on ACTEDS (Army Civilian Training, Education and Development System), Leader Development, and the “Trail Guide for Future Leaders.”

Useful Internet Addresses

Suicide Prevention Training

The Installation Chaplain's Office offers Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, a monthly suicide prevention course. Supervisors and personnel in leadership positions are highly encouraged to attend. To enroll, please call CPT Mavis Hutchings, 6-6042. POC is CH (MAJ-P) Steve Demien, Family Life Chaplain, 6-0087

ASSIST Training

Dates: 15-16 Dec 04

Times: 0830-1600

Location: Specker Chapel

POC: SGT Grady

The Army Ethic

DUTY is doing what needs to be done at the right time despite difficulty or danger; it is obedience and disciplined performance.

INTEGRITY means steadfast adherence to a standard of honesty, uprightness and particularly to the avoidance of deception.

LOYALTY to the nation, to the Army, to the unit and its individual soldiers is essential.

SELFLESS SERVICE puts the welfare of the nation and the accomplishments of the mission ahead of the individual desires.

Lead Facilitators Needed

Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Course is mandatory for all new supervisors appointed within the past 12 months. The LEAD program is administered by the Center for Leadership Training Division (CLTD). LEAD Facilitators are needed. Contact Donna Grzyb for further information or go to

<http://www.wood.army.mil/dcltsf/LEAD.htm>

FLW Job Announcements

<http://www.wood.army.mil/cpo/employ.htm>

CPOL Vacancy Announcements, Army Resume Builder, and Answer

<https://cpol.army.mil>

USAjobs

<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>

Go to Search Jobs

Select State/City

Select Get Results

CPAC Homepage

<http://www.wood.army.mil/CPO>

NAF Job Announcements

http://www.fortleonardwoodmwr.com/nona appropriated_fund_employment.htm

Army Benefits Center (ABC/Civilian)

<https://www.abc.army.mil>

TSP

<http://www.TSP.gov>

Long Term Care

<http://www.ltcfeds.com>

FEGLI

<http://www.opm.gov/insure/life/>

MyPay

<http://www.dfas.mil/mypay/>

**Income Tax Information is at this website
W2's on line 6 Jan 05**

" Training Corner "



Human Resources for Supervisors

The first Human Resources for Supervisors class was held this past quarter after many years of its transition to an on-line correspondence course.

The first class (pictured above) was full of inquisitive military and civilian supervisors as the CPAC staff with assistance from the Directorate of Common Leader Training (DCLT) staff covered numerous subjects concerning civilian employment. This class is now held on a quarterly basis. The first priority is for new supervisors of at least three civilian employees. Contact DCLT at 3-4121 or email atztlp@wood.army.mil to sign up for this valuable training

Training Available for Civilian Employees

- 13-17 Dec 04 LEAD (full)
- 13-16 Dec 04 Contracting Officers Course (full)
- 24-28 Jan 05 ASAT Course
- 24-26 Feb 05 Test Development Workshop
- 1-3 Feb. 05 Quantitative Skills for Trainers
- 23 Feb 05 EEO & Diversity Issues for Supervisors
- 24 Feb 05 Job Classification for Supervisors
- 25 Feb 05 Interviewing Techniques for Supervisors
- 7-11 Mar 05 HR for new Supervisors
- 21-24 Mar 05 LEAD
- 29 Mar 05 Step-up to Leadership
- 30 Mar 05 The Supervisory Advantage

Awards

Nominations For Leadership Award Are Now Being Accepted

The Army Incentive Awards Board is seeking nominations for the **2005 ROGER W. JONES AWARD FOR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP**. This award is granted by the American University (AU) School of Public Affairs to career executives of the Federal government who have “made a difference” by demonstrating:

- Superior leadership, which resulted in outstanding organizational achievement.
- Strong commitment to the effective continuity of government by successfully bringing about the development of managers and executives.

Two career executives will be selected and honored at a special ceremony on the campus of AU in the fall of 2005. To nominate a candidate, the following information must be included in the nomination package:

- Signed major Army command (MACOM) endorsement and a point of contact for information.
- Biographical data (employment and significant awards).
- Justification (description of superior leadership that resulted in organization achievement’s nature and significant and specific role, and description of strong commitment to effective continuity of government, development of managers and executives, specific actions, and success in institutionalizing the development of career executives and individual managers and executives).
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)/Adverse action certification.
- Photograph.

For additional information about the 2004 recipients of the Roger W. Jones Award, visit AU’s website at http://spa.american.edu/pdf_files/nominations.pdf. Nominations must be forwarded through Installation Management Agency (IMA) or Mission command who will forward it through the command channels to the Executive Secretary, Army Incentive Awards Board, ATTN: DAPE-CP-ESO, Room 2C453, 300 Army Pentagon, Washington, DC 20310-0300 **no later than December 17, 2004. The Army Incentive Awards Board will review all nominations for the Jones Award.**

(Marvol Alexander/(703) 695-5698 or DSN 225;
E-mail: marvol.alexander@hqda.army.mil)

Nominations For Public Administration Now Being Accepted

The Army Incentive Awards Board is seeking nominations for the 2005 William A. Jump Memorial Foundation Award. This award is intended to be an encouragement to young people for increased interest, growth, development and high level performance of work in public administration, and reflects quality as well as integrity.

Eligibility: Federal civilian career employees who have not reached their 37th birthday by December 31 of the year in which the nominations are submitted are eligible.

Criteria: Performance, over a period of at least 5 years in either a line or staff position, must demonstrate:

- Unusual competence and interest in any area of public administration.
- Leadership shown in the direction or development of programs.
- Creativity and resourcefulness.
- Close adherence to the basic principles of enlightened public service.
- Integrity.
- Dedication to duty.

The term "public administration" covers all aspects of executive-administrative direction, supervision and development or operation of Federal activities. Public administration includes, for example, personnel administration, budgetary and financial administration, administrative analysis, all management and administrative planning activities, and the executive planning and direction of programs.

To nominate a candidate, the following information must be included in the nomination package:

- * Signed MACOM endorsement and a point of contact for information.
- * Biographical data (employment and significant awards).
- * Justification (examples of specific accomplishments and contributions which illustrate interest, leadership qualities, creativity and resourcefulness, adherence to basic principles of enlightened public service integrity and dedication to duty). Community service may also be addressed.
- * EEO/Adverse action certification.
- * Photograph.
- * Proposed citation (approximately 90 words).

Nominations must be forwarded through Installation Management Agency (IMA) or Mission command who will forward it through the command channels to the Executive Secretary, Army Incentive Awards Board, ATTN: DAPE-CP-ESO, Room 2C453, 300 Army Pentagon, Washington, DC 20310-0300 **no later than March 31, 2005. The Army Incentive Awards Board will review all nominations for the Jones Award.**

(Marvol Alexander/(703) 695-5698 or DSN 225;
E-mail: marvol.alexander@hqda.army.mil)

Software Training

Software training is no longer offered through the Professional Development Center (PDC). Please do not email or telephone PDC requesting attendance for software courses. The Learning Assistance Center (LAC) is the office responsible for the computer based software training. Here are the steps to access their web page:

- **Go to the Fort Leonard Wood web page**
- **Select Departments/Directorates**
- **Select Directorate of Common Leader Training**
- **Select Training Technology & Information Center**
- **Select Clarke Library**
- **Select Learning Assistance Center (LAC)**

The following info is taken from their web page:

"All software training is now computer based, and is offered via SkillPort through AKO. The LAC has scheduled specific time for individuals to take Microsoft office courses in the LAC so that staff members are available to assist with questions or problems with the courses."

Special Emphasis Program (SEP) Staff

Current Managers:

Melvin "Mac" McNair	Equal Employment Opportunity SEP
Vacant	American Indian/Alaskan Native Program*
Kim Moats	Asian/Pacific Islander Program
Jocelyn Morris	Federal Women's Program
Bobbie Overshon	Individuals With Disabilities Program
Clem Perez	Hispanic Employment Program
CW3 Farrell Chiles	Black Employment Program

If anyone has an interest in applying for this volunteer/collateral duty position, please contact Mac McNair at 596-0602 for details.

Severe Weather Instructions

Winter Weather

It's hard to imagine but snow and ice will be here before the next edition of the Civilian Update. The following advice is provided to you when you look out your windows and find your ground covered in white!

Listen to the following radio stations for information on whether or not to report for work or if there is a delayed opening. Do not assume a delayed opening has been declared until you hear it on one of these radio stations.

24 hours

Starting at 0500

KJEL-LEBANON 103.7 FM

KJPW-Waynesville/St Robert
102.3 FM

KTTR/KZNN-Rolla 1490 AM

KDAY-Rolla 975 FM

KRMS-Lake area 93.5 FM
Or 99.7 FM

KFLW Waynesville/St. Robert, 98.9

KZNN-Rolla 105.3 FM

KFBD-Waynesville/ St. Robert 97.9 FM

Normal Duty hours are 0730-1630. Liberal leave policies will be in effect.

Those employees designated critical and essential must report for work under all conditions. These employees are/will be identified in writing by managers.

If you are in doubt, your supervisor is just a phone call away. It is always advisable to keep the communication line open between you and your supervisor. Supervisors are required to account for the time you spend at work, time spent for excused absences, and time spent on leave.

The Civilian Personnel System Must Be "Perfect"

By: John D. Kerr

Sir Winston Churchill once wrote, *"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often."* If he is right, the civilian personnel system should be REALLY close to perfection.

I arrived at Fort Sill some 20 years ago as an energetic, somewhat knowledgeable and very eager civil servant. Along with me came my beautiful young family, my full head of hair, great eyesight, my own knees, excellent golf skills, and a waist size about equal to my age.

Today, although my belt size still approaches my age, my beautiful young bride is now "Damma" with more time allotted for the grandkids than for me. My kids are well out on their own (except when their paychecks are a little short), and my eyesight has weakened to a point that I, fortunately, can't see the hairballs in the shower drain. Today I have enough steel in my joints to trigger metal detectors even before I enter the airport and, alas, my golf game has deteriorated to where it is best described as penitence rather than recreation.

Over the years I have learned to accept change... Lord, how I've learned! We all must. Changes are inevitable. But we can take to heart that many changes are for the better- most certainly so when we consider the changes that have occurred in the Army's civilian personnel world.

Fort Sill is blessed with an exceptional civilian workforce. These men and women are dedicated to supporting our soldiers, marines, families, retirees and each other, and to meeting our many missions. They can and will adapt to meet any challenge, and always have despite our not-so-responsive civilian human resources (HR) policies and practices. HR really needed an overhaul.

In the mid-70s, after many years of constant "unchange", we implemented the Civil Service Reform Act designed to *provide faster, more effective management of the Federal civilian personnel system*. The act gave managers many new programs and authorities designed to make it easier to run an office, a military post, or the Federal government. New means of recruiting and evaluating candidates and new rules for the workplace were introduced. The changes were extremely regimented and process-oriented, but jobs were plentiful and all seemed well.

Change again reared up from the ashes in the mid-80s. We began to consider contractor performance of work formerly done by government employees, and received decisions to reduce or close military installations. We were given opportunities to retrain into other career fields, and to retire earlier than under normal conditions. Some of us were even paid incentives to voluntarily leave Federal service. For the first time in memory, quality civilian employees became concerned about their employment future. My primary CPO focus was no longer on hiring new employees, but in assisting our "less new" employees affected by change.

As we entered the 90s, the powers-to-be heard the cry of frustrated managers and said *"We need a means to provide faster, more effective management of the Federal civilian personnel system."* (Sound familiar?) But, as importantly, Army leadership was also now saying that we needed a way to reduce the enormous cost of administering such a system. Regionalization, the "R" word, was born.

Regionalization of civilian personnel services has saved the Army millions of dollars. That's a good thing. Under "R", each of the more than 100 fully functioning civilian personnel offices was reduced in manpower by an average of 55%. Our CPO mission on the installation changed from full service support to advisory. Many of the HR processes formerly performed on each installation, processes such as preparing announcements, rating applications and maintaining personnel records, are now sent to a regional center where the staff can, in fact, do the work more economically. Even our name changed to CPAC, or Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

But what about all of the remaining personnel work that the local CPO staff once did? In possibly the most dramatic HR change to date, Army said that most of this work will now be the responsibility of the individual supervisor or the affected employee.

All at once managers were tasked with the responsibility of such HR functions as writing and classifying jobs, submitting recruitment actions, developing recruitment strategies, negotiating salaries, writing disciplinary letters, scheduling and approving training, and many more. Things like promotions and benefits counseling were moved to a central Army location with a phone number or internet address. To compensate for not being given additional staff, we were given a variety of new automation tools and told to *"go forth and do great things."*

For the first several years most of these tools did not work well. They were slow, user unfriendly, and often impossible to access. Even as they improved, the users, already frustrated, were reluctant to keep trying to make them work. As a Federal employee you can't afford this attitude.

Happily I can report today that most of the tools do work, and work well. As a manager I use the HR automation tools to help me update or create new position descriptions. I access systems that track my working personnel actions, detail the volume and timeliness of actions completed, and chart trends for successfully filling those yet to be submitted. My personnel suspenses are maintained electronically and a beep helps cure my absent-mindedness. Job seekers world-wide can see recruitment announcements for my vacancies, and I receive resumes at the speed of light. I type questions on technical personnel issues into one of the many reference systems and, believe it or not, get my answers in English rather than in CPO-speak. *I luvz dis country!*

I use programs that allow me to see awards, training needs, leave balances and education levels of my staff. I can see when they are due a step increase, their current position descriptions and their salary rates. I can look at my health and life insurance benefits packages and make some changes online. I can register, obtain approval and often take training from my own PC. I have analyzed my thrift savings plans and moved funds between accounts. I can apply online for a promotion and have computed my income after retirement based on alternative retirement dates. These things, and much more can be done quickly, privately and accurately.

Changes, updates and new civilian HR tools are coming at us fast and furiously. Every DA civilian employee and every manager, supervisor, or administrative officer associated with that employee can benefit from the information available through these tools. The key is for you to determine what tools you need to help you accomplish your job. Learn what ART, FASCLASS, PERMISS, and such can do for you. From there it's relatively easy to learn how to use them.

Oh yes, and one final comment. We have determined that there is a need to *provide faster, more effective management of the Federal civilian personnel system*. We'll soon be changing to the National Personnel Security System (NSPS) Army-wide. But let's save that for another article.

Extraordinary



Winner's Circle Network with Lou Tice - 11/23/04 - "Extraordinary"

How do athletes go from contender to superstar? How do ordinary people become extraordinary? Here's a secret to achieve breakthrough performance in your everyday life.

Everyone has times when they feel like they are unstoppable, times when they are doing whatever it is they do with ease, grace and incredible skill. But no one, not even the best of the best, can operate in that ideal performance-state 100% of the time.

The secret to achieving extraordinarily high levels of performance is learning how to take command of your mind and body so that you can operate at your peak when you need to, and relax and recover in between. Here's how.

First, goal-setting is a key. Many people don't like to set goals because they don't like to fail. However, you have to develop mental toughness if you're going to grow, and setting and achieving goals is one way to do it. Another way is to develop the ability to get rid of negative thoughts when they occur and substitute images of success and power.

Finally, sticking to a sensible program of self-care - including good nutrition, regular restful sleep, built-in periods of laughter and play, and vigorous physical exercise - will do wonders for your self-image.

Are you willing to settle for "ordinary" in your life, or do you want something more? If you do, go after it with everything you've got and believe in your ability to do it!

Lou Tice

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Glad you Asked

Your questions answered

Question:

"I'm thinking about going to a part-time work schedule, what impact would that have on my future retirement annuity? How would that impact my current benefits, such as costs and coverage for my health and life insurance?"

Answer:

Part-time employees under permanent appointments are eligible, on a prorated basis, for the same benefits as full-time employees: leave, retirement, and health and life insurance coverage. The following describes eligibility, coverage, and limitations.

Leave and Holidays. Employees earn annual and sick leave on a prorated basis depending on the number of hours worked per pay period. An employee with less than 3 years of service earns 1 hour of annual leave for each 20 hours worked; with 3 but less than 15 years of service, the employee earns 1 hour for each 13 hours worked; and with 15 or more years of service earns 1 hour for each 10 hours worked.

Part-time employees earn 1 hour of sick leave for each 20 hours worked. Part-time employees are also eligible for other kinds of leave and are covered by the rules governing the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and the Federal Employees Family-Friendly Leave Act.

If a holiday falls on a day the employee normally works, the employee is paid for the number of hours he or she was scheduled to work, not to exceed 8 hours, except for an employee on a compressed work schedule. A part-time employee is not entitled to a holiday, which falls on a day the employee is not normally scheduled to work.

Retirement. Retirement annuities are based on an employee's length of service and the highest annual base pay received for any three consecutive years. Each year of part-time service counts as one full year toward the length of service requirement. However, the annuity calculation for periods of part-time service after April 6, 1986, is prorated to reflect the difference between full-time and part-time service. Employees who are considering a change to a part-time work schedule should obtain an estimate of their retirement benefits from their agency's benefits office.

Health Insurance. Part-time employees who participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program receive the same coverage as full-time employees but pay a greater percentage of the premium because the Government's share is prorated based on the number of hours the employee is *scheduled* to work each week. For example, an employee on a 20-hour-per-week schedule receives one-half the Government contribution towards the premium.

Life Insurance. A part-time employee is eligible to participate in the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program. The amount of insurance for which an employee is eligible is based on the part-time employee's annual salary applicable to his or her tour of duty.

Qualification Determinations. Part-time work is prorated for determining qualification requirements. For example, an employee who works 20 hours a week would receive credit for 6 months of experience at the end of 12 months of work.

We welcome your questions

We try our best to answer your questions as they are presented. If you would like to know something that we may be able to answer or find out the answer to, you are more than welcome to email us at atztcp@wood.army.mil and the answer will be posted in the next UPDATE bulletin.

Leave Recipient Program

There are many employees who need your generous donations of annual leave you cannot use before the end of the leave year. Visit www.wood.army.mil/CPO/leavetra.htm for general information about the leave transfer program and forms to become a recipient, as well to become a donor of leave time.

The following employees are approved leave recipients:



CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM

Our goal is to provide TIMELY, ACCURATE and PROFESSIONAL service to all our customers. We need your feedback regarding the kind of service we provide so we can analyze how we are doing. Would you please take the time to complete the following items?

Please identify the type of personnel action we worked on. Thank you for your comments, suggestions and overall evaluation of our service.

- **PRODUCT IDENTIFIER** (type of action): _____
Examples: evaluation of application, referral list (PERSACTION number), processing of benefits, pay issues, job description, update of OPF, processing of award, nomination for training, responses to inquiry, etc...

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Was this action completed/service provided in an acceptable time frame? | ___ | ___ | |
| 2. Do you think the product is accurate and represents good staff work? | ___ | ___ | |
| 3. Did you get the kind of information you needed to make informed choices? | ___ | ___ | |
| 4. Were our interactions with you courteous? | ___ | ___ | |
| 5. Overall, how would you rate the product/service you received? | | | |
| ___Excellent | ___Good | ___Adequate | ___Unsatisfactory |

- Please provide any comments/suggestions/recommendations you may have for ways that we can improve our service. We are particularly interested in specific feedback on any of the items you may have checked "NO".

6. If you would like a *personal response* to your suggestion or comments, please provide your name, phone number and electronic mail address.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form. My expectation is that my staff will provide prompt and courteous service to all our customers. The CPAC believes in "People Serving People."

Please mail this form directly to me, send it electronically to atztcp@wood.army.mil, or fax it to 573-596-0289. If you would like to discuss this or any other matter, I can be reached at 573-596-0280 or via email. I look forward to hearing from you.

Director
Civilian Personnel Advisory Center
140 Replacement Ave, Ste 2210
Fort Leonard Wood, MO 65473-8935

Army Civilian Personnel Professionals - Helping Leaders Meet the Mission

EDITORIAL POLICY

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO SHARE YOUR OPINIONS, IDEAS, AND SUGGESTIONS. ALL CORRESPONDENCE MUST HAVE THE NAME AND LOCATION OF THE ORIGINATOR IN THE EVENT THERE IS A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. PLEASE FORWARD COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, OR NEWS ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION TO THE EDITOR, EMAIL:

atztcp@wood.army.mil



Even though yellow ribbons and United States Flags have been displayed for a while in support of our troops, continued prayers are offered for these troops and their families. We all wish the best for their safe return home.

